

*WASHINGTON, DC (August 10, 2010) – Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued the following statement today on her vote in favor of H.R. 1586, the Education Jobs and Medicaid Assistance Act. The House voted to pass the bill 247 to 161 and will now be sent to President Obama's desk.*

The House reconvened to take up The Education Jobs and Medicaid Assistance Act, emergency aid that will help states keep teachers in classrooms and keep first responders on duty, ultimately saving and creating nearly 320,000 jobs. The legislation is fully paid for and reduces the deficit by \$1.4 billion over 10 years—in part by closing loopholes that have encouraged corporations to ship American jobs overseas and get tax breaks.

“Passage of this emergency funding was absolutely essential to help prevent further losses of critical jobs and support services across the country,” said Schakowsky. “This legislation extends Medicaid assistance for an additional 6 months and provides Illinois with \$545 million to ensure that women and children, seniors, and people with disabilities do not lose access to the needed health care that has become more difficult to come by in the economic downturn.

“Thanks to this emergency funding, teachers will not be greeted with unmanageable class sizes of 50 students, and critically, these educators and school support staff can be spared a wave of pink slips,” said Schakowsky. “In Illinois alone, the \$10 billion in educator support will save 5,700 teacher, school counselor, and school support service jobs.”

Nationwide, the legislation provides \$10 billion in funding to save more than 160,000 education jobs. It also provides \$16.1 billion in health assistance to the states that, by reducing shortfalls and stimulating the economy, will save and create 158,000 jobs as well as saving private jobs throughout the economy.

“This legislation is smart policy that will prevent job loss, create jobs and keep them on American soil, ultimately getting us out of the Great Recession sooner—the antithesis of Congressional Republicans’ ridiculous claim that this bill will kill jobs,” said Schakowsky. “The painful reality on the ground has resulted in a bipartisan cry for help from the majority of the nation’s Governors, including many Republican Governors.”

Organizations including the bipartisan National Conference of State Legislatures, National Association of Counties and the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations support this critical federal help.

“This legislation not only helps American teachers, police, firefighters and nurses keep jobs that were on the chopping block or regain lost jobs now—it serves a longer-term goal of preventing many Americans from requiring unemployment assistance or Medicaid because of job loss. These programs are already straining under the weight of the economic downturn,” said Schakowsky.

“This necessary funding goes beyond saving the jobs of critical public employees; it also protects job loss in the private sector. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that for every 100 layoffs in the public sector, the private sector sheds 30 jobs.”

While passage of the legislation was critical, Schakowsky does not support the provision that cuts food stamp funding that had been increased in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

“I am incredibly disappointed that the Senate included a provision that would hurt families who rely on food stamps—a lifeline in this tough economic climate by reducing funding beginning in 2014,” said Schakowsky. “Food stamps provide vital, short-term support to Americans in their greatest time of need, ensuring that no one’s table is bare. I am committed to working with my colleagues to restore food stamp funding, before these cuts can take effect.”